



SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1942.

This Report is prepared on the lines asked for by the Minister of Health in Circular 2773. In accordance with his directions most information usually contained in the Report is omitted and filed for future reference.

Noel F. Pearson M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. Medical Officer of Health since January 1940 was called up for service in the Army on the 31st October, 1942. Gilbert Bodley Scott M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., was appointed Temporary Medical Officer of Health as from 2nd November, 1942.

Infectious Disease

There are no outstanding facts regarding the incidence of infectious disease in the District during the year which call for comment. The two cases of Diphtheria notified were adult patients both of whom were admitted to Vine House Isolation Hospital, Sturminster Newton, administered by the North Dorset Joint Hospital Board (of which your Authority is a constituent member).

Diphtheria Immunisation

During the year Immunisation against Diphtheria has been carried out in accordance with the Council's Scheme which makes immunisation free of cost, available to all children between the ages of one and fifteen years. A monthly session was held throughout the year at the First Aid Post, Gillingham, to which children from the northern part of the District were invited, and children from the southern parishes were invited to the monthly session held at the Shaftesbury Westminster Memorial Hospital. In addition, treatment sessions were held in villages where the number of applications justified such an arrangement being made. In spite of this, however, there still remained a certain number in the more outlying parts of the District unable to receive treatment on account of transport difficulties, and at the end of the year the matter was receiving consideration with a view to improving this position.

At 31st December 72% of children of school age had received treatment, and 51% of children under school age.

Scabies

This is not a statutory notifiable disease and therefore it is difficult to estimate the prevalence of the condition in the area. The number of cases admitted to the Sick Bay during the year, however, gives some indication of the incidence of the disease. From the North Dorset District 113 cases of Scabies were admitted during 1942, 32 of these being from the Shaftesbury Rural District. More cases than this no doubt occurred, but school returns showed a considerable reduction in the incidence, especially towards the latter part of the year when a rise in the number of cases had been anticipated.

Sanitary Work

A vacancy occurred in the post of Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor in July owing to the resignation of Mr. H. C. Cox. Mr. T.F. Ayrton succeeded him and commenced duties on the 1st September, 1942.

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Evacuation

The number of evacuees in the District was again reduced, but arrangements to cater for those remaining have been very satisfactory.

The Hostel at Melbury Abbas was closed temporarily in December owing to the lack of domestic staff, and the children there were transferred to the newly established Hostel at East Orchard Rectory where accommodation is provided for eighteen children.

Ready reciprocal use by all the Authorities in North Dorset of the various Hostels and Nurseries within the several districts has again been achieved by the ready goodwill and mutual assistance of the Chief Billeting Officers.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation of the courtesy and help afforded to me by your Council and Officers.

G. B. SCOTT,

Temporary Medical Officer
of Health.

18th June, 1943.